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C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 000533

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SA, SA/INS, PM/B, L

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03-28-13

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KTIA](#) [MV](#)

SUBJECT: Status of Maldivian non-surrender of nationals agreement

Refs: (A) SA/INS-Colombo 03/27/03 class e-mail

- (B) Colombo 512, and previous
- (C) State 74061 (all Notal)

(U) Classified by Lewis Amselem, Deputy Chief of Mission. Reasons: 1.5 (B,D).

1. (C) Per Ref B and previous, Mission has been in close and constant touch with the Maldivian government, pressing it to sign the non-surrender of nationals agreement as soon as possible. The Maldivian MFA has told us that the plan is to have Foreign Minister Jameel sign it. (Note: The Maldivians have, so far, made it very clear to us that they want Jameel to be the principal who signs the document for their side.) Once that is done, the document would then be sent to Embassy Colombo for signature by the Ambassador.

2. (C) We are not sure why the Maldivians are taking so long to complete this process, since agreement on the text was completed last week. (Note: Per Ref B, the final text is that proposed by the Maldivians and approved by Washington in Ref C.) It is possible that the war with Iraq has somehow affected Maldivian thinking on this issue (although we do not think this is the case). It is also possible that there is bureaucratic confusion leading to inertia in the government (which is endemic in the GoRM), or that Jameel is busy and just has not got around to signing the document. In any case, as noted, we are pressing the Maldivians hard to wrap this up ASAP.

3. (C) That said, Mission has forwarded Ref A request that the Maldivians sign the document during Ambassador Lino's visit to New York next week. The MFA is closed today, as it is Friday (the start of the weekend in the Maldives), and Mission has not received a response to this request. We suggest that Washington continue to work this issue with the Maldivian Mission in New York. We will continue to be in close contact with the MFA on this important matter.

4. (U) Minimize considered.

WILLS